Tuesday

Never a man, I shall never be anything but an aged child. I live with ' all the incoherence of a lyric poet, but two or three ideas, crosswise in my brain and rigid like parallel bars, crucify every joy; everything that would like to try its wings at random runs into them.

Written a rather important letter to Jammes; read some Montaigne.

After lunch worked on my novel;[34] I go to enormous efforts to roll that mass a bit forward, not because it is so heavy, but because there is no place to grip it.

Took tea with Em.; read Darwin aloud for an hour.

Around five o'clock I go to the Criquetot fair. Medium-sized crowd, in which the fear of not speaking to those who recognize me and of speaking to those who would not recognize me makes me slip along like a thief behind the booths. A few gypsy wagons with a dozen very ugly and very poor children. Came home terribly depressed.

It is frightening how much I have aged recently. Certainly something is not right inside me. It is impossible to age more rapidly or to be more aware of it. I cannot yet take this seriously, believing in a passing fatigue. Already I experienced this hideous aging last year, at the same time of year.

Wednesday

Strange drowsiness of the mind and of the flesh.

Lethargy. After a great effort, this morning, to wind up my first chapter (and I do not succeed) I plunge into reading (Dostoyevsky's *From the Notes of an Unknown* Man).[85]

Excellent reading of Darwin (aloud). The moments spent with Em. (particularly in the garden) are extraordinarily pleasant Her affection, her charm, her poetry envelop her in a sort of effulgence in which I warm myself, in which my fretful mood melts.

After having labored over it for several hours, suddenly my work

deciding to progress toward evening, I make up my mind to remain here
one day more.

Thursday

No, Albert's health worries me too much. I leave, in a hurry to see
him again. He can no longer digest anything but eggs; here are two
dozen gathered this morning on the farms.

[8]* *La Porte ftroite (Strait Is the Gate).*

[85] Two short stories by Dostoyevsky, "An Honest Thief and "A Christ-
mas Tree and a Wedding," bear the collective subtitle: *From the Notes of an Unknown* Man.